THE

HEROINE of the CAVE.

A

TRAGEDY.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL

Jones (Henry) of Drogheda

IN

DRURY-LANE.

———Nox atra cavâ circumvolat umbrâ,
O digno conjuncta Viro!
Tu ne cede malis; sed contrà audentior ito
Quam tua te Fortuna sinet. VIRG.

DUBLIN:
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MDCCLXXV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

ALL VIRTUOUS WIVES.

THE following finiſhed Pattern of connubial Attachment, and heroic Exertions of *true* and becoming female Fortitude, are moſt reſpectfully dedicated, by

Their moſt obedient

and Humble Servant,

PAUL HIFFERNAN, M. D.

LONDON,
March 24, 1775.

BRITISH
8 MR 1921
MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THE late Mr. Henry Jones, author of the now acted Earl of Eſſex, and ſeveral other poetical productions, had left in the hands of Mr. Reddiſh, a very affecting piece in three acts, called *The Cave of Idra*, founded on a narrative in the Annual Regiſter.—It was, according to his compoſition, all under ground, which gave to it a tireſome and diſguſting monotony, unfit for a ſtage repreſentation.

A conviction of this obvious and ſtriking defect, induced Mr. *Reddiſh*, (and this application gave being to the preſent Drama,) to ſubmit it to the inſpection of, for a new moulding, and amplifying of the ſubject by Dr. Hiffernan, author of an Eſſay on Dramatic Genius.

He determined to encreaſe the number of characters, which in the original were only Alberti, Conſtantia, Lorenzo, Everard, Faulkner, Clermont, and the Jailor.—He next broke through the enſabling uniformity of a continued, ſubterraneous gloomy ſcene, and from time to time, admitted, upon what otherwiſe would prove a moped audience, the chearing light of day.—In ſhort, all the under-ground part, except the ſolemn hymn, which cloſes the ſecond act, and the ſlave Clermont's *exit* ſpeech in act third, are Mr. Jones's; in which are many inſtances of the true pathetic and poetically ſublime, that would do

honour to the foremoſt pens that have ever written for the Theatre.——

Dr. Hiffernan's additional improvements to this piece, conſiſt in adding ſeveral new characters to the above.—The firſt and fifth acts are entirely his; and the beginning of the ſecond, till Conſtantia goes off from Vienna; as, are alſo, the firſt ſcenes of the third act, and of the fourth act.—In fine, all the under-ground ſcenes, except, as already premiſed, were compoſed by the deceaſed author; and all the above-ground, with the Prologue and Epilogue, by the living.—This Tragedy was acted for the firſt time, on Saturday, March 19th, 1774, for the benefit of Mr. Reddiſh, at the Theatre-Royal of Drury-Lane; and, was three times performed, laſt ſummer, on the Briſtol Theatre, with repeated applauſe.

In regard to the performers, Mr. Reddiſh acquitted himſelf with the moſt critical propriety, with juſt dramatic energy, and throughout the part of Alberti, appeared a more conſummate actor, than in any other character he hath as yet performed.—Miſs Younge, has, in Conſtantia, ſo far tower'd above her uſual excelling, that it will be dangerous for any but a capital actreſs to undertake, or hope to be endured in this character after her.—The parts of leſs importance, were, be it ſaid, to the credit of the ſeveral actors, well and judiciouſly repreſented: Mr. Cautherly's was moſt happily ſuited to him.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. REDDISH.

PROLOGUES in gen'ral are a kind ſalute,
Hoping the author's work your taſte may ſuit;
And if ſo lucky as to 'ſcape your frown,
He ſtruts the fav'rite poet of the town:
Thanking dame Nature that has been ſo kind
T' endow him with a more Parnaſſian mind,
Than ſhines in dramas of his *dull* compeers,
Whom in news-paragraphs he ſlily ſneers.
Licentious vehicles of groſs abuſe,
That, *ſnakes*—(anonymous) each day let looſe;
Sparing nor *birth*, nor *worth*, nor high degree,
Their venom dart at *all*—nay ev'n ſo low as me!
If 'cauſe my *efforts*, to approve, you deign;
I'll be more *guilty*,—ſtill encreaſe their pain;
New whet their rancour—more provoke their ſallies,
If you're my *patrons*, need I dread their malice?
Now from the *actor* to the *author* turn,
Whoſe proud ideas with vain-glory burn;
Declaring, loth to praiſe, but prone to ſlight,
"No!—We're but few now qualified to write.
"What numbers ſcribble in Apollo's ſpite!
"Had the dull fellow ſhewn his play to me,
"I had giv'n't life, at leaſt in ſome degree,
"And made it *crawl* out nights, to *three* times *three*."
But if a piece of his in turn ſhou'd fail,
How chang'd his tone, how bitter does he rail!
Swears, as away he pen, ink, paper flings,
There is no certainty in human things!—

Yet

PROLOGUE.

Yet here, *ſucceſs* or *failure* oft proceeds,
Not from fair judgment but unmanly deeds,
Of vi'lent parties, forming a cabal,
The one to *raiſe*, the other to *appal!*
Men hir'd to roar out proſtituted praiſe—
And honour dulneſs with an idiot *gaze!*
Yet ſtill more ſhameful, who through ſelfiſh ends
Of foes malignant,—or of jealous friends,
Waiting the ſignal, in dark ambuſh ſit,
To act the worſt of *murders*,—that of *wit!*
None ſuch we truſt are here!—but if there ſhou'd,
They'll by a candid audience be withſtood.
Cruel oppreſſion ſhocks an Engliſh ear;
From your known equity we baniſh fear!
The leading author of our ſcenes to-night,
Has been long ſince remov'd from either plight.
Out of the reach of cenſure or applauſe,
He'll tremble not as up the curtain draws.
This tribute to his muſe, let ESSEX plead,
A farewel ſprig of laurel round his head,
Nor *hate*, nor *envy* combat with the *dead!*

BRITISH
8 MR 1921
MUSEUM

Just Published,

CLEONICE.

A TRAGEDY.

BRAGANZA;

A TRAGEDY.

Written by ROBERT JEPHSON, Esq.

The PATRIOT KING; or, IRISH CHIEFS:

A TRAGEDY.

Written by HENRY DOREY.

The CHOLERIC MAN;

A COMEDY.

Written by RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

THE RIVALS;

A COMEDY.

THE MAID OF THE OAKS;

A New Dramatic Entertainment.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

The Count Alberti, - -	Mr. REDDISH.
Clermont, - - - - - -	Mr. CAUTHERLY.
Rodolpho, - - - - - -	Mr. J. AIKIN.
Everard, - - - - - -	Mr. PACKER.
Lorenzo, - - - - - -	Mr. BRERETON.
Faulkner, - - - - - -	Mr. FAUCETT.

The Emperor of Germany,	Mr. JEFFERSON.
Prince Cofredo, - - -	Mr. PALMER.
Seyfert, Prime Miniſter, -	Mr. HURST.
Mentzel, - - - - - -	Mr. DAVIS.
Colonel of the Guards, -	Mr. WHEELER.

Cuiraſſiers, Jailor and Chaplain.

Laura, - - - - - - -	Miſs PLATT.
Conſtantia, - - - - - -	Miſs YOUNGE.

The SCENES are alternately at VIENNA, and in the Cave of IDRA.

BRITISH MUSEUM 8 MR 1921

THE

HEROINE of the CAVE.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Prime Minister's House.

SEYFERT. BURMAN *at a Distance.*

SEYFERT.

REVENGE, thou art the deity I adore!—
From thy auspicious shrine I hope a cure
For the corroding pain that rends my heart.
The vain Alberti being thus preferr'd
By fair Constantia, passeth all enduring!
Colredo I have rous'd—Another wooer—
And in his name are such reflections dropp'd,
As 'twixt the two a duel must provoke—
My purpose is, whoe'er the conqu'ror be,
To reap advantage for my private views.
If that Colredo triumph o'er Alberti,
I to his widow will renew my suit—

Or,

Or, if Alberti ſhould diſpatch Colredo,
I'll ſo poſſeſs th' imperial ear againſt him,
As that immediate ſentence ſhall take place,
Death, or impriſonment in Idra's Cave;
Where he'll not deign to eke out life in toil,
But ſoon emancipate his ſoul for higher worlds—
Burman, approach!—And this your taſk fulfil.
Since you have learn'd the place where they're to meet,
Range near the choiceſt of my men conceal'd,
To carry off the ſlain or hurt Colredo—
Around, place guards diſguis'd to ſeize Alberti.
Such are the orders from above receiv'd—
The cogent reaſons you ſhall know hereafter;
Be quick—be diligent—and hope to riſe!—

Bur. In this, as all things, I ſhall prove my zeal.

Seyf. I know thou wilt, from long experienced truth.

[*Exit Burman.*

I have ſo plann'd I think I muſt ſucceed—
Unleſs capricious fortune war againſt me—
I'll to the Emperor—and prepare him for the event.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Rampart of Vienna near the Gate of the City.

Count ALBERTI *and* RODOLPHO.

Alb. No more, Rodolpho—Strive with efforts vain
To warp me from the purpoſe of my ſoul;
That's fix'd! unalterable! as the ſtamp of fate—

Rod. But, Sir, conſider with what danger's fraught
Thy deſperate reſolve, to act againſt
The imperial mandate of our gracious ſovereign,
Who'll ne'er forgive thy diſobedient rage.
'Tis friendſhip ſpeaks, and reaſon backs my zeal.

Alb.

Alb. I love thy friendſhip—but to reaſon's call
Am now reluctant; nor will hear her voice—
The die is thrown; and one or both muſt periſh;
Thy friend, or fortune's minion in Colredo.—
Oh! 'tis an inſult manhood cannot pardon;
No, none but ſuch as wear its coward form,
Void of all impulſe from a noble heart.

Rod. Yet, Sir, if what's the fountain of our honour
Call'd, and rever'd, doth ſpecially forbid
Our farther proceſs in attaints of glory,
And takes upon itſelf the event of all,
I mean the Emperor's ſupreme command;
Then ſure no ſtain from dutiful ſubmiſſion
Can e'er ariſe—That from the charge of ſhame
Abſolves—and reconciles us to ourſelves again.

Alb. Such doctrine may be fit for vulgar minds,
But cannot ſuit the ſwellings of a ſoul
That in my ſovereign's cauſe hath never fail'd
To act the foremoſt in the ranks of danger—
And ſhall it prove a recreant in my own?
Yes, proud Vienna!—oft with thankful hymns
Your churches rung for conqueſts I had won;
And through your ſtreets loud acclamations ran,
As in triumphant march I paſs'd along,
To hail me fav'rite of the throne and people.

Rod. And ſuch you ſtill may prove—ſuppreſs this wrath,
And bind your ſovereign more by mild complying;
'Twill win new favours, and defeat the malice
Of your combin'd, your ſecret foes—but chiefly
Seyfert's—than whom a darker villain never breath'd.

Alb. I know him well—great artiſt in deceiving,
Train'd up in all the ſubtleties of courts,
And policy's mean, cringing, baſe devices,
He can convert to a friendly ſmiling look
His Protean features on the man he hates;
Oh! that ſuch monſters ſhou'd debaſe our kind!

Rod. He'll be the firſt t' exaggerate the crime
Of thy tranſgreſſing monarchy's command,
Which he'll not fail with ev'ry art to paint
In the moſt odious, moſt offenſive light,
T' obtain thy exile or inglorious puniſhment.

Alb. Yet he's the very engine of this quarrel
Started between Colredo and myſelf;
Through various hints by his low creatures dropp'd,
From th' ancient grudge that twixt our houſes rag'd,
H' has hurried both from means of reconcilement;
At leaſt on my ſide—blood muſt be the conſequence—
Now is the hour I've dared him to a meeting,
His ſword 'gainſt mine to terminate the fray.

Rod. (holding him.) Stop—and attend Rodolpho's laſt requeſt!
Since pow'rs high mandate, or the voice of friendſhip,
Can't turn thy ſoul from its determin'd purpoſe
To fall or conquer, in this teſt of manhood—
Conſider, Sir, if fate ſhould adverſe prove,
And rob the world of thy illuſtrious life,
What muſt th' affliction of Conſtantia be?
Conſtantia! foremoſt of Vienna's dames!
Conſtantia! woo'd by all our German princes!
Who to Alberti gave a preference;
That made him envied by the great and brave.
More would I ſay—but anguiſh ſtops my words—
And ſtealing tears ſupply my want of ſpeech!

Alb. Rodolpho!—hold!—appear not thus unmann'd;
No heart more tender, and no arm more brave,
Than I have always known this man's to be!
The dangerous infection gains upon me—
I muſt defeat it ere it be too late!—
Hear, and obſerve Alberti's ſtrict command;
His laſt perhaps—And with it take this laſt
Embrace—Be not ſeen near the place of combat,
Leſt in my peril you ſhou'd be involv'd.

Rod.

Rod. I care not for my life if thou ſhould'ſt fall,
But Conſtantia!

Alb. Oh! that name diſtracts me!
And raiſes a new tempeſt in my ſoul!
If from my fate Conſtantia prove a widow,
(She'll be expos'd again to a ſiege of wooers
Whom ſhe repuls'd thro' virtuous diſlike)
And all her days in biterneſs muſt paſs—
Or, if I decline t' aſſert her innocence,
The ſland'rous whiſp'ring of Colredo's faction,
Will through Vienna, o'er the empire ſpread
With an implicit charge of cowardice.
Hell's in that thought—Conſtantia muſt reject me,
As a reproach to her too partial choice,
For one who dared not vindicate her name.—
Pride—glory, fame, ambition, love riſe up
In mutinous array to urge me on. [*Rodolpho offers to ſpeak.*
'Tis now no time for thought, blow winds—drive ſtorm,
What honor dictates, courage ſhall perform. [*Exit Alb.*

RODOLPHO. (*alone.*)

How this unhappy man to ruin haſtes!
Nor heeds the admonition of a friend!
Nor tend'reſt paſſion for the beſt of wives!
Once diſobedient to Alberti's order, [*Pauſing.*
I'll after, and, at diſtance, wait th' event—
If ſlain, his body will inter in private;
Or if victorious, aid him in his flight. [*Exit Rodolpho.*

SCENE III.

A Square in the City, and Place of general Rendezvous.

LORENZO *and* MENTZEL *meeting.*

Lor. Mentzel, well met, and at th' appointed place
For all my zealous meſſengers to come,
And bring report if brave Alberti's ſword
Shall on this day another conqueſt gain;
Or in a bold encounter with Colredo,
Shall for the firſt time ſuffer a defeat.

Mentz. 'Twill be thought more than bold, rebellious deem'd,
To force Colredo 'gainſt our ſov'reign's mandate
To ſuch forbidden act of violence—
Good Heav'n! that paſſion can ſo far prevail
On the all-poliſh'd temper of Alberti,
Thus obſtinate to ſeek another's fall!

Lor. Alas! thou little know'ſt the galling cauſe
That irritates his ſoul to noble vengeance:
Had he declin'd, I muſt wipe off the ſtain
Which vain Colredo caſt upon us both.

Mentz. In what, my Lord, or how? Your words amaze me,
Nor can I well interpret what they mean,
But juſt returned to Vienna's court,
From regimental duty that had call'd
To a far diſtant province—You'll excuſe me,
An ignorance of moſt tranſactions here.

Lor. I do moſt frankly—will ſuccinctly tell
The origin of this dire altercation.
Between Colredo and the Count Alberti,
Men once in friendſhip link'd, and two the moſt
Of all our German officers renown'd
For courtly poliſh, and heroic proweſs,
With other lords of court they woo'd my ſiſter,

Con-

Conſtantia, reigning beauty of the time.
She to Alberti's vows alone prov'd kind,
And made a virtuous choice of him for huſband;
For which ſhe had my warm approving voice:
That ſtung Colredo's overbearing pride
To terms of moſt outrageous inſult.

Mentz. There's ſome excuſe for diſappointed love,
Whoſe rage oft hurries to unguarded words
That calm returning reaſon bluſhes for.

Lor. Granted—in many caſes—but not when
They tend to blaſt a noble houſe's fame
With ſuch foul hints—as if Alberti had
Obtain'd a favour 'fore the marriage rites.
The which, I knowing, dar'd not to reſent,
And act an honourable brother's part.

Mentz. That's groſs, and caſts forgiveneſs at defiance;
Too plain I ſee that one or both muſt periſh.

Lor. I meant to firſt engage; Alberti ſtopp'd,
And ſaid, as huſband, that the right was his.
But who haſtes hither?—Anxious, out of breath?
One of my zealous emiſſaries—Say——
Did you ſoon find the place where they agreed
To meet? And know'ſt thou aught of what is paſs'd?

Meſſ. Colredo, Sir, is fall'n—Alberti triumphs.

Lor. I aſk no more—Come, Sir.—Be you our guide.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in ALBERTI's *Houſe.*

CONSTANTIA.

Where is my huſband?—Where is my Alberti?
What cauſe ſo early from his bed could rouſe,
And make him ruſh forth, with impatient ſpeed?
Something I fear of dangerous intent
Hangs brooding o'er his mind—for all the night,

In broken ſlumbers, ſighing did he paſs,
With frequent invocation of my name.
" Conſtantia, frail! Colredo, thou art falſe."
The repetition of thoſe words alarm'd me,
And when awaken'd by returning morn,
I hop'd from him the unravelling to hear.—
But ere my ſenſes from the bonds of ſleep
'Woke to the ſocial offices of life,
Alberti was gone forth! What muſt I think?

Enter LAURA.

Madam, this letter did my maſter give
With ſtricteſt charge of laying it before you,
On your upriſing, at whatever hour;
But not to haſten't—by imprudent zeal.

Conſ. Ah me! I dread to take it from her hand!
My courage fails me to break ope the ſeal:
I pray you will, and read the dire contents!
For ſuch, my throbbing breaſt anticipates.

LAURA *reads the Letter.*

" Madam,
" Colredo has reflected on your honour,
" Your ſpotleſs innocence; your virgin fame
" His ſland'rous tongue has wantonly revil'd.—
" This morn he anſwers for the baſe attempt,
" And ſhou'd his luckier ſtars prevail o'er mine,
" Act like thyſelf; thou wert Alberti's wife."

Conſ. (pauſing.) How could he doubt?—Give me the letter, Laura—
The laſt perhaps I ſhall receive from him!
Why drop theſe woman's tears as I peruſe it?
Come, let me place thee near this faithful heart,
As the laſt will of an expiring hero!

[*Puts the letter in her boſom.*

Enter

Enter the SERVANT.

Madam, the Lord Rodolpho earneſt waits—

Conſ. Admit him.—

Welcome, Rodolpho! my Alberti's friend!
I have been told the purpoſe of the day.
Say, what's th' event?—Is't for, or makes againſt us?

Rod. In part 'tis for, in part againſt us, Lady!

Conſ. In part againſt!—Oh, does Alberti live?
If wounded! let me fly to his aſſiſtance.—

Rod. My friend, your Lord, the courteous, brave Alberti
Soon made Colredo fall beneath his ſword—
He ſtraight was bleeding carried off the field
By Seyſert's creatures, ſcreen'd around on purpoſe;
As were the guards, to ſeize upon Alberti
If he ſhou'd victor prove, the other ſlain;
And be for diſobedience, and the crime
Of murder, t' Idra's dreary cave conveyed;
No ear for mercy left, to gain his pardon.
Your brother, and the nobles of his party
Are to the court repair'd, to try all means,
If not an abſolute releaſe to win,
At leaſt ſome mitigation to obtain
From a fell ſentence that is worth than death.
Thither I've promis'd all my friends to bring,
When I the tidings ſhou'd have borne to thee
Of what was paſs'd, and meant yet to be done.

Conſ. Haſte thee, Rodolpho, with the ſpeed of friendſhip.

Rod. I fly on friendſhip's wing to ſave my friend.

Conſ. Now duty calls that I aſſert myſelf,
And prove I'm worthy of Alberti's love!— [*After a pauſe.*
I'll go and rouſe up every virtuous wife,
Each noble matron, and each blooming maid
Within Vienna's walls; aloud make known

The

The wrong that's done them in Alberti's fall!
Should supplication meet with disregard,
From the obdurate heart of worldly pow'r,
For intercession with th' almighty Being,
I'll make my last appeal to pitying saints:
Earth, air, and heav'n shall ring with my complaints.
[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

The Road from Vienna.

A Colonel, with subaltern Officers, and a Corps of Soldiers,
ALBERTI *in the Middle a Prisoner.*

Col. Here do we halt, and my commission ends—
To me a most unwelcome one!—from us
You pass to th' common instruments of justice,
That the condemn'd to Idra's Cave convey.
[*They appear at the side.*
We all lament, great Sir, your hapless fate!
Lo! ev'n the rabble weep for your disaster!

Alb. Next to a people's praise for deeds of glory,
Is to be wept for in the frowns of fortune.
Thanks; thanks to all:—who will be vain hereafter?—
[*After a Pause.*
That e'er Alberti shou'd be brought to this!
In chains! condemn'd to galling infamy!
He who has made the Austrian Eagle soar;
And clap triumphant wings on hostile tow'rs!
And taught their troops the art of victory!
Now all his laurels wither'd in their bloom
Beholds! (himself yet in the prime of life)
'Tis terrible!—but, manhood, bear me up!

Col. How moving, Sirs, in such a plight to see
The chief whom we've all gloried to obey.

Alb. Through

Alb. Through what refinement of barbarity
Am I refus'd th' attendance of a friend
To ſee me to my melancholy goal!—
And why refus'd a parting interview,
To give a laſt embrace to my Conſtantia!
Oh! there I ſuffer!—Every fibre ſhrinks!
My blood recoils! and all my ſpirits fail
At the dire thought of what ſhe now muſt feel:
I hear her groans; they rend my tortur'd ſoul!

Col. Deſpair not, Sir! for ſoon relenting pow'r
Will change its too ſevere decree, to mercy.
Some latent viper is the cauſe of all.

Alb. Deſpair's a word, a ſoldier ne'er ſhou'd know—
[*pauſes.*
For honour's idol I have done too much;
Now let the Chriſtian hero in me riſe:
That in adverſity ſtill greater ſhews
Than midſt th' applauding of victorious troops—[*kneels.*
Divine example! how to ſuffer wrong!
And pardon thoſe who injure us the moſt!
Stretch thy compaſſion to the fall'n Alberti.
Deign to ſupport him in this heavy hour,
Let him not ſink beneath calamity.
Since greateſt empires periſh at thy nod,
Let ſuff'ring mortals kiſs affliction's rod:
In all reſign'd to thee, my Saviour, and my God!

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Street near the Palace.

RODOLPHO *and* MENTZEL.

MENTZEL.

OH! how I ſuffer for Conſtantia's ſake!
I tremble, leſt ſome fatal error ſhou'd enſue.

Rod. All future ages muſt applauding hear
When the brave Count, her huſband, hence was forc'd
By rigid ſentence to the Cave of Idra—
A torpid interval numb'd every ſenſe,
And all the wheels of life a while ſtood ſtill;
But bounteous Nature ſoon reviv'd their ſprings:
Then all the horrors of her dread condition
Ruſh'd gaſtly—glaring on her tortur'd ſoul.

Mentz. At ſuch a ſight, humanity muſt ſhudder!

Rod. No words can utter what her heart endur'd
Beneath th' impreſſion of the horrid blow:
She flew to court to plead her huſband's cauſe;
Her language ſuch as guardian angels utter,
Who pray for mortals at the throne of grace.

Mentz. And yet, alas! ſhe met not with ſucceſs!
Where was Lorenzo then to back her ſuit?

Rod. The inſolence of Seyfert had provok'd
His gen'rous nature up to ſuch degree,
His friends by force withdrew him from the court,
Leſt his too warm reſentment ſhou'd incur
A treatment baſe as Count Alberti has;—
But let us ſeek and ſtrive to comfort him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

ALBERTI'S *House.*

CONSTANTIA *and* LAURA.

Lau. Madam, for Heav'n sake moderate your grief!
Nor let fierce anger prey upon your mind!
With patience wait; a retributive hour
Will amply pay the agonies you feel.
Conf. Preach patience to the winds—to roaring seas,
But not not to me!—Comfort I ne'er shall know;
Its healing balm disclaims a wretch like me;
A wretch who caus'd the noblest hero's fall
That e'er with bold atchievements grac'd the field;
For me he's lost, my honour to assert!
Oh! there's distraction in the horrid thought!
It kindles a new Ætna in my bosom,
And drives me mad! a prey to wild despair!
Lau. Good angels, calm the tempest in her heart!
Conf. How!—be refus'd a common suppliant's right!
Admittance, and a hearing from my prince!
In the behalf of his most gallant chief!
To be debarr'd from bidding him adieu!
And taking a last farewel kind embrace!
This to the wives of criminals they grant:
Why am I singled out for such disgrace!
Th' affront is meant to me—thro' Seyfert's malice:
He may afflict—but ne'er shall bend my soul!—

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Madam, this paper's from Lord Seyfert brought.
Conf. How! from Lord Seyfert!—it can bode no good,
But I will read—whatever the contents.

" To Lady Conſtantia."

" It is commanded by th' imperial will,
" That in her houſe Conſtantia be confin'd,
" And dare not zealous application make
" In vain behalf of the condemn'd Alberti.
" Shou'd ſhe repugnant prove to this decree,
" The Emperor commands without appeal,
" She forthwith to a convent be convey'd,
" In its ſequeſter'd gloom to end her days."
LEOPOLD. SEYFERT.

Vain threats to one who's fix'd, reſolv'd, already;
[*Throws down the paper—Laura takes it up.*
I'll fly this town where tyranny reſides,
To find a ſpeedy death, or my Alberti—
Relentleſs holder of an iron ſceptre,
In the laſt moments of thy cruel life,
May th' ear of Heav'n prove deaf as thine to pity—
And barr'd againſt thee be the door of mercy!
But in this world to puniſh lawleſs pow'r,
May ceaſeleſs thunder bellow round your walls;
May the keen light'nings ſhoot in vollies down,
And of your city make one gen'ral blaze!
At which my ſoul will feel luxurious joy—
When all Vienna is reduc'd to aſhes,
Riſe! ſwell! O Danube, from thy loweſt bed,
And with a foamy torrent ſweep away,
That not a relique of its pride remain
To tell poſterity that ſuch things were.

Laur. Alas! her reaſon's gone, and madneſs now prevails!

Conſ. Come! let us haſten from theſe hated walls,
And ere their ranc'rous hate prevent my flight,
I'll mounted on a whirlwind's friendly wing
O'ertake Alberti, who's the world to me. *Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

A Cave in the Quickſilver Mines of Idra.

Enter EVERARD *and* FAULKNER—*lighted by a* SLAVE.

Ever. In all our travels thro' the eaſtern world,
No ſight of greater wonder or diſmay
E'er ſtruck our eyes than this of Idra's cave!
Of all whoſe horrors I'll a picture juſt
Give to Alberti, near th' imperial throne
The foremoſt courtier, my much honour'd friend.—
What horrors ſtrike me in this hideous path
That leads directly to the door of death?
My frighted ſenſes have their functions loſt!
My eyes, my ears, my feeling, and my judgment,
Are robb'd of their accuſtomed faculties;
Nay, ſtartled nature knows not here her own
Eſtabliſh'd laws! a hollow dreadful chaos!

Sla. Ah! Sir, what think you then of us? Condemn'd
For life to groan in theſe infernal cells,
And never more to ſee the radiant ſun?

Ever. Can human hearts impoſe on fellow creatures
Such a curſe?

Sla. Ah, Sir! you ſee but little yet of what
We miſerable wretches here endure.

Faulk. What are you here condemn'd to groan out life
For ſome atrocious crime? If ſo, ſure death
To you and all wou'd be a welcome mercy.

Sla. It ought, alas! but wretched mortals, Sir,
Will cling to nature, tho' ſhe ſpurn them from her:
For crimes indeed, but diſproportion'd crimes
Are many to this horrid cave condemn'd.

Ever. Oh, tyranny! thou horrid, hateful peſt!
Who gratifieſt thy appetite of death.
With ſights like theſe, and glut'ſt on miſery!
My free-born nature ſtartles at thy ſhape!
Oh, dear bought precious, precious liberty!
I taſte thy heav'n deſcended cordial now!
Now, now, my happy country's name adore!—
Oh, bliſsful Britain! little do thy ſons
Regard th' ineſtimable privilege
That they enjoy above the reſt of mortals!
Their birth-right, Liberty! that glorious claim;
That joy of reaſon! and that pride of man!

Faulk. Say, finiſh'd ruin of thy former ſtate,
Oh, ſay! wou'd not a ſpeedy death be welcome?

Sla. Indeed, good Sir, I felt it ſo at firſt,
And often call'd on death to ſet me free.
But that thanks to Heav'n, whoſe wiſe, whoſe gracious ways
To human ſearch are paſt the finding out.
My better angel, watchful at my ſide,
Still whiſper'd meſſages of grace and love,
And pull'd my lifted arm with ſweet perſuaſion down.

Faulk. Can then ſuch manly ſentiments remain,
Such eloquence within a heart like thine?
My impatient ſoul with eager longing pants
To hear thy cruel fate! Say whence you came,
Your rank, and what misfortune brought you hither.

(Enter an Officer from the Cave.)

Off. Get hence unto thy taſk thou talking loiterer,
Thy time is not thine own, the breath thou draw'ſt
Belongs not to thyſelf, but to the Emperor:
Thou canſt not long hold out—thy time is near;
Get hence thou ſlave! and work it to the laſt,

Ever.

Ever. Say, wretch, art thou of human clay compos'd?
Has cuſtom turn'd to flint thy harden'd heart?
Forbear thy hateful hand—there's money for thee.

Off. Oh! Sir, you know, I ſee, the way to melt me.
Flinty as I am, Sir, this ſhall ſoften me.
Preach on, preach on, but make thy ſermon ſhort;
I ſhall not be thy hearer yet a while— [*Exit.*

Sla. Such are the hourly inſults which we here
Endure; but thanks to Heav'n they'll quickly ceaſe!
I feel my ſpirits fail, they bring me news
That weary life and I ſhall quickly part!

Faulk. I pray, good Sir, indulge us with your ſtory:
I long to hear it, and perhaps may ſerve thee.

Sla. Fain wou'd I gratify thy friendly wiſh,
Thou gen'rous man! and tell thee my ſad tale:
But, oh! the retroſpect ſevere will wound me!
Yet bear my bitter narrative with patience,
And pity the diſaſters thou ſhalt hear!
My country, France; my rank, a gentleman!
An unadvis'd, a haſty raſh adventure
Expell'd me from my native ſoil for ever:
Hither I fled, and ſerv'd a while the Emperor,
But, oh! the agonizing thought that ſhall
For ever goad my guilty breaſt! alas!
Alas! a virgin fair of rank and beauty
From forth the holy convent's ſacred walls
I did ſeduce with ſacrilegious arts;
And in the black attempt I kill'd her brother.
Wou'd Heav'n had ſnatch'd my memory away,
And ſilenc'd ſoon the ſharp accuſer here!—
For theſe repented crimes I'm thus condemn'd
To drag about a living death within
This horrid cave!—Five ſummers, Sir, are paſt
Since theſe defrauded eyes have ſeen the ſun,
May the firſt light they view be that of Heav'n!

Excuſe my weakneſs, worthy gentlemen,
My guilt is heavier than my galling load!
Faulk. Your fault was faſhion's crime;—I pity you:
Can nothing, Sir, be thought of for your ſervice?
Have you no friend at court? no int'reſt there?
Sla. Alas! my int'reſt in this world is vain,
And all redreſs to me wou'd come too late!
Ever. By Heav'n a happy thought! thou ſhalt be free!
The manly, brave, the noble Count Alberti
Is my diſtinguiſh'd, ever honour'd friend!
Himſelf a ſoldier of the firſt emprize,
The Emperor will never him refuſe
A boon like this; then hope, Sir, to be free.

(*Enter the* OFFICER.)

Get hence thou ugly fiend in human form!
This happy ſoul ſhall ſoon defy thy power,
Thy iron reign o'er him will quickly end!
Few days ſhall paſs 'fore he's from hence releas'd!
Off. Releas'd! there is but one releaſe from hence,
And death muſt be the bail! and ev'n then
The body here muſt reſt; this cave his tomb!
You'll, Sir, remember me before you part.
Ever. How vile extortion does itſelf ſuſtain
In this midway to Tartarus—from thence
It came—and ſpread its baneful influence
In the world above—how this caitiff vile,
This goaler of a dungeon, dark as hell,
Holds forth his pitchy palm for venal bribes,
And impudently apes, forſooth, his betters.
Thou man afflicted! I prophetick feel
An impulſe in my heart ariſe, that tells
Thou ſhalt e'er long be bleſt with ſacred freedom;
Then hope—the Count Alberti is thy friend.

Sla.

Sla. I fain wou'd purchaſe yet another leaſe
Of life, and be at large to pay my thanks—
But hark! our nightly pious exerciſe
Begins—to hear't may not diſpleaſing prove.
Follow, I'll guide where beſt you may behold!

THE SOLEMN HYMN.

By the SLAVES.

I.

From ſcenes of horror, ſcenes of woe!
No reſpite ſhall we ever know;
Nor riſing, nor a ſetting ſun;
At either ſtill our pain's begun!
We're doom'd thro' life in theſe drear cells
To toil and hear each other's knells!

II.

Oh, God of mercy, God of pow'r,
At mankind's firſt or lateſt hour,
All are the objects of thy care!
Fly hence black demons of deſpair!

III.

No den ſo deep—or dark a place
But feels the radiance of thy grace;
When leaſt we hope the day may dawn,
We from theſe terrors ſhall be drawn.

CHORUS.

Oh, God of mercy, God of pow'r,
At mankind's firſt or lateſt hour,
All are the objects of thy care!
Fly hence black demons of deſpair!

ACT III.

SCENE I.

CONSTANTIA'S *House.*

LORENZO *and* LAURA.

LORENZO.

HOW did my ſiſter go? and when depart?
And which way did ſhe ſteer her deſp'rate courſe?
Did you not ſtrive to keep her till my coming?

Lau. My Lord, I did; as far as I cou'd dare,
And ev'ry anxious argument employ'd,
Which ſhe with ſeeming acquieſcence heard,
And ſaid ſhe wou'd rely on Heav'n's decree;
Then ſent me forth to pray Rodolpho's lady
Wou'd come to ſoothe her melancholy hours.
I chearfully obey'd—but on return,
Found, with aſtoniſhment, that ſhe was gone!
No token left behind of her deſign:
'Twas this fell paper hurried her away.

LORENZO *reads it.*

Cruel indeed, and of alarming purport;
What ſubject's ſafe, if ſuch dire orders paſs
Unfelt, and unreſented by a people?

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. The Prince Colredo———.

Lor. Are the dead reviv'd!
Admit him ſtraight—[*Exeunt Colredo.*] You are a ſight of joy
To me, tho' here a cauſe of miſery—
The ancient palace of Alberti's race
Is now a deſart ſcene of deſolation;

It

Its maſter to the Cave of Idra ſent,
And poor Conſtantia fled; we know not whither
This cruel ſcroll has caus'd her ſudden flight.
Col. Let me behold, and the contents peruſe.
[*Reads it.*
"Leopold,"—that's not the Emperor's hand—
Lor. No?—
Col. No, by Heav'n! I know it, Sir, as well
As my own hand, and cannot be miſtaken.
Lor. But that is Seyfert's ſignature you'll own.
Col. It is moſt ſure—and hence do I ſuſpect
Seyfert to be a moſt ſaginious villain;
Therefore I'm hither come for information
Of all relating to th' unhappy duel,
Ere I preſent me to the Emperor,
Whom Seyfert has induc'd to think I'm dead;
And had his plan ſucceeded muſt have been,
Having employ'd a ſurgeon, not to cure
But poiſon me—yet under friendſhip's maſk.
The man, too honeſt for ſo baſe a deed,
Deceiving Seyfert let me know the whole.
This dark tranſaction ſoon ſhall be diſplay'd
In the ſtrong colouring it deſerves; and
Prove the means of reſcuing Alberti.
Let's ſend forth ſcouts to ſcour the country round,
And bring the fair Conſtantia to her home.
You'll with me to the court, to join complaints
Againſt this unprovok'd, this harden'd villain.
Lor. My Lord, let's loſe no time in virtue's cauſe.
We'll call upon Rodolpho in our way,
Whoſe intereſt will ſtrengthen our deſign. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

The Cave.

Enter EVERARD *and* FAULKNER *followed by Slaves.*

Ever. It anſwers well what fame ſo loud reports,
And is indeed prodigious!—ſo uſeful
Are mechanic laws in all the offices
Of artful life.
Faulk. It is indeed amazing!
And ſpeaks the forward folly of the human heart.
Ever. How luxury with lynx's eye can pierce
Thro' Nature's bowels with a vulture appetite
And ranſack to the centre for a toy!
A ſhining toy, to dazzle vanity
And glitter on the greedy eye of faſhion,
The ſhame of reaſon and her boaſted ſons.
Sla. Man has many natures in his eſſence,
That long lie hid and unperceiv'd by him,
But oft ſtart up at rigour's ſtrong command;
Put on ſtrange ſhapes, and leap the common bounds,
Alas! we know not what diſtreſs can do.
Ever. I long to ſee the ſun for thy ſad ſake,
And make thee in thy own deſpite yet happy.
Oh! what an extaſy to hearts humane,
To lift th' oppreſs'd with comfort giving hand,
And labour joyful for another's peace.
Sla. Heaven will ſure reward thy feeling heart,
When I am mingled with the duſt for ever.
Ever. Nay, bend not thus to black deſpondence, Sir.
Fortune and Count Alberti may bring back
The bliſsful moments to thy wounded ſoul
With unexpected ſpeed—look up—be happy.
Sla. The cordial of thy words, if aught on earth
Cou'd lift my ſorrowing ſoul, would make me happy.

Enter

Enter ALBERTI *behind with a Lamp, and on ſeeing* EVERARD *ſeems much ſurprized.*

Ever. The Count Alberti I have ſeen with joy
Applauded, and with laurels cover'd o'er;
He was indeed a man belov'd, and fortune
Bleſs'd him; if he lives, he is happy ſtill,
And ſhines in favour at th' Imperial court.

Alb. Ha! hark! do now my ears admoniſh truly,
Or are thoſe eager eyes inform'd aright?
Oh, Heav'n and earth! it is, it is, my friend!

Ever. What means this prying ſlave? he ſeems to know me.

Alb. Is that the voice of friendſhip ſo long loſt
To my ſad organs in this cave accurs'd?
In ſpite of black deſpair it is my friend!
I muſt be ſatisfied and look him through.

Ever. What wou'd thy ſharp inſpection thus diſcover?

Alb. Is that! is that!—It is my honoured Everard!

Ever. Ha, thy Everard! Say what ſpirit art thou?
Yet ſomething grates upon my memory:
I think I've heard that alter'd voice before.

Alb. Thou haſt, indeed! in better time and place.
My name! my name, alas! was once Alberti.

Ever. Was once Alberti! ha! then know'ſt thou not
The noble Count, my friend, who bears that name,
That honour'd name? he could ſurely ſerve thee.

Alb. I knew him once; but, oh! he's ſtrangely alter'd.

Ever. Not alter'd from his noble nature, ſure,
Or happy rank, thou doſt betray his worth.

Alb. Aye, alter'd to the wretch that ſtands before thee—

Ever. Ha! transform'd to ſuch a thing as thou art!
In ſuch a ſhape as thine! the Count Alberti!

Alb.

Alb. I cannot wonder at thy hard belief:
Thou coud'ſt not ſure expect to find me here.
Ever. What, in the Cave of Idra! Nature now
Has mingled mad extremes in one dark maſs,
And all diſtinction is for ever loſt!
Alberti foremoſt in the liſts of glory!
What miniſter of wrath has brought thee hither?
Alb. I have a tale to tell thee, Everard, that
Wou'd melt the rocks of Scythia at the ſound,
Nay, make the tyrants of this dungeon weep.
Ever. Thy ſtate already racks my tortur'd ſoul.
Can aught be added to a lot like thine?
What dreadful tale of woe remains behind?
Alb. A tale unequall'd yet, by talking time,
In all his regiſters of love and honour.
Ever. Too true I ſee; by Heav'n it is thyſelf!
The poor remains, the image pale, the manes
Of my noble friend! Oh, tell! tell me all,
Good Heav'n and earth, what brought thee to this den?
Alb. An evil chance adminiſter'd my ruin,
My crime was but a ſoldier's raſh career,
Who gave to glory what was wiſdom's due.
The Prince Colredo, Gen'ral of the horſe,
In rivalſhip of love and fame I fought,
And left for dead upon th' appointed ſpot:
Againſt th' Emperor's ſevere command, who
Had forbid, on pain of death, the duel—
For this ſole act, to which my honour urg'd,
Here am I doom'd to drag a painful life.
Depriv'd of comfort, and of light for ever.
Sla. Oh, how wond'rous are the ways of Heav'n!
My lot, my bitter lot reſembles thine:
I had a claim, like thee, to better fate.
Alb. Like me! like me! thou art but half a wretch—
Ever. My hopes are blaſted now of thy delivery:
And

And oh, Alberti! injur'd man, my heart
Muſt ever bleed for thee.

Sla. Alas! my ſoul, Sir, wedded unto grief,
With joy attended to thy chearing promiſe,
But ſo repreſs'd by checks of riſing fear
As wont with minds in melancholy plung'd.—
I dar'd not let keen rays of hope break forth,
Howe'er illuſive to my fancy's eye:
They're now abſorpt in diſappointment's gloom.—
Yet ſince the fam'd Alberti's here, why ſhou'd I
With impious plaints juſt Providence arraign?
[*Looking affectionately at him.*
His hapleſs fate makes me forget my own. [*Exit.*

Alb. My gen'rous friend, enough!
The door of hope, with adamantine bolt,
Is barr'd againſt my baniſh'd breaſt for ever!
This den my bed, theſe horrid walls my curtains,
Theſe bounds my proſpect, and theſe ſights my joy;
This moral atmoſphere my vital gale;
Theſe fumes my frankincenſe, this vault my heav'n,
Deep groans my muſic, and theſe lamps my noon;
Hard ſtripes my triumph, and this yoke my vict'ry,
My ſceptre ſorrow, and my crown deſpair!

Ever. My greatly injur'd! Oh, my wretched friend!

Alb. Yet here, ev'n here, hath nature left her gates,
Her thouſand friendly gates wide open ſtill,
For wretchedneſs to paſs, and lead to death:
What think'ſt thou, my Everard, that my ſoul
Cou'd brook exiſtence on ſuch terms as theſe,
This love of abject, hated, horrid life?
To bear theſe bitter marks of nameleſs woe,
And be a witneſs of my own undoing;
To cling, to cleave a reptile in the duſt,
And own myſelf a man; a ſoldier too;
Who fought for glory in the fields of fame,
And gather'd laurels from the lance of death;

Ha!

Ha! this hand much better knows its office;
A friendly dagger here ſhou'd write my prompt
Diſcharge, and quickly free me from this cave.

Ever. I ſhou'd not wonder at thy bold reſolve,
Nor blame the manly, hardy deed when done:
Sure, none but hypocrites, and earth-born worms,
Thy firm thy Roman purpoſe cou'd arraign,
And call the neceſſary noble deed a crime.

Alb. And I had done it long ere now, my friend,
This vital pulſe had ceas'd to beat, theſe eyes
To ſee their own ſad ſtate; theſe ears to hear;
This wretched, throbbing, breaking heart to ſuffer!
And I had been beyond the reach of woe,
And bid at once my horrid lot defiance.—
But, oh, my Everard! I am chain'd to being
A precious magnet ſtronger than the earth,
Th' attractive earth, and cent'ral ſun, now draws
Me to itſelf, and makes a heav'n of this
Deteſted cave, and me an emperor.

Ever. Alas, my noble friend! thy ſorrows have
Diſturb'd thy better part; thou talkeſt idly;
How my heart bleeds to ſee thy mind in ruins!

Alb. No, no, my Everard, all my thoughts are in
Their proper places, and attend to reaſon,
And every intellectual pulſe beats right,
Now, canſt thou gueſs what reconciles my ſoul
To this ſad ſtate, and brightens Idra's cave?

Enter CONSTANTIA.

Conſt. I have not miſs'd thee from my ſide ſo long,
Since that important day I firſt came hither:
Oh, ſay then, what cou'd thus long detain thee?
Or am I grown leſs pleaſing to thy ſight?

Alb. Oh, ſee the gem, th' ineſtimable gem!
Whoſe bright angelic beam annihilates

This

This nether hell, and makes it all a heav'n!
Oh! unexampled, and immortal woman!
Thou ſole delight, thou phœnix of thy ſex!
Thou matchleſs wonder, and thou ſtar of truth!
Where now are all the boaſts of ancient ſtory?
Or where is Cato's boaſted daughter now?
Look there upon that clouded angel's face,
Oh, my Everard, and thy heart muſt bleed.

Ever. I ſtand amaz'd, and know not what to do,
For heav'n's ſake explain thyſelf, my friend,
And from this wonder draw the veil aſide.

Alb. Throw down that mark of thy abhorr'd condition,
And look upon that human face with joy.

Conſt. What ſaving angel in the ſhape of man,
Hath paid a viſit to a wretch like thee!
If heav'n hath ſent thee, ſay thou art his friend,
And brighten with thy ſmiles this dark abode.

Alb. He is my friend, and feels my heart's diſtreſs;
Oh, Everard! turn thy eyes upon her,
Eclipſed as ſhe is; yet ſhining through
The envious gloom that clouds her—Abſtract,
My friend, her ſad exterior ſeeming,
With eye intuitive, and read her ſoul.
Her beauty once was worthy kings to bleſs,
And ſpotleſs angels might compare with her.

Ever. By heav'n, there's ſomething in her air and port
That awes me, thro' the mean diſguiſe ſhe wears;
Nay more, I think I've ſeen this face ere now,
When no afflictive darkneſs robb'd the world
Of its reſpendent luſtre: tell me dethroned
Beauty where thou once did'ſt reign—for my ſoul
Wou'd be acquainted with thy ſorrows, and
Liſt'ning, heaven knows, wou'd fain redreſs 'em.

Conſt. I think I ſaw thee at my father's palace
Attending on the Lord Ambaſſador,
That very day the peace was ſolemniz'd,
And all Vienna was in joy triumphant;
I think I ſaw thee with my dear Alberti
On friendly parties—and thy name is—Everard—
Eve. By heaven, my faint conjecture aim'd aright,
The only daughter of the Prince Vaneſky—
A curſe upon your country's hated laws!
What crime haſt thou committed, honour'd Lady—
Thou lov'ly innocence, condemn'd to groan
With toiling ſlaves, and labour in a mine.
Alb. Her crime, my friend, is virtue in exceſs,
Beyond example, and without a name:
A voluntary victim ſhe came hither;
She left her father, and her faithful friends,
She left the ſplendors which her lofty birth
And plenteous fortune gayly flung around her,
With a moſt liberal and unſparing hand;
She left the ſetting ſun, the riſing ſtars,
She left the bloom of nature in its pride,
She left the circling ſeaſons, laughing year—
She left the morning, and ſhe follow'd me
To darkneſs, danger, and the door of death,
And thought herſelf a gainer by the change.
Conſt. And ſhall for ever think: this tool, this mattock,
This mark of miſ'ry made for peaſants hands,
For groaning ſlaves to graſp, beneath the ſcourge
Of taſk-impoſing flinty fiends, in forms
Of men: this emblem of calamity,
This inſtrument of moſt ſevere affliction,
This badge of ſorrow ſharp, I wou'd not change
For the bright ſcepter of the Gallic monarch;
Nor quit this dungeon, to be Empreſs made

Of

Of all the earth, and rule the ſubject world,
Without my dear Alberti.—Thou, thou art
All to me; my father, friends, my fortune,
Splendor, and the world's applauſe: thou to me
Art all the ſeaſons, ſun, and moon, and ſtars,
The ſmiles of nature, and the laughing year.

Alb. Hear'ſt thou that, my Everard!——

Ever. Let my looks (my words are loſt in wonder)
Anſwer thee. And art thou of mortal mould,
Can human nature boaſt a work like thee,
The finiſh'd labour of thy Maker's hand?
And wou'dſt thou here conſume thy precious life
Within the horrors of this cave accurs'd?

Conſt. Ah, look upon me, worthy Sir! behold,
The marks of a reſolv'd determin'd ſoul
Are deep engraven here. Alas, they were
Not made to witneſs in a cauſe like this;
But they are honeſt. When I forſake thee,
O thou dear matchleſs man! Bear witneſs, heaven,
How I rejoice, how glory in my lot,
And drag my chain with joy, link'd cloſe to thine!
With joy forget the gaudy glitt'ring world,
When yok'd in bondage, and a ſlave with thee.

Alb. Now, now, it ſtrikes upon my vital ſpring,
My ſoul awakes, and rouſes ev'ry power;
Oh, horrid thought! without all hope, all comfort,
Thou ſhalt not thus be loſt, for ever loſt
On my account; I here will dig my grave,
And lay me down to ſleep at reſt for ever,
Nor rob the world of ſuch a ſaint as thee.
Whilſt thou, my pride, my heart's ador'd delight,
Shalt once more viſit day, and ſee the ſun,
And bleſs thy parents and thy happy friends,

And bleſs the joyful world.—By heaven, my Everard,
'Tis ſacrilege, 'tis murder to detain her here—
I'd rather die ten thouſand deaths than ſhe
Shou'd be a ſlave; I cannot view that garb
Without diſtraction!—dreadful words! Oh never!

Conſt. What means this conflict in thy troubled heart?
This haſty, ſudden, ſtrange emotion in thee?

Alb. She muſt not periſh in a ſty like this,
Who ſhou'd converſe aloft with angels—Go,
Go back, and bleſs mankind with all thy virtues,
All thy beauty, all thy bright example;
Go back, be bleſs'd, and there forget there liv'd,
There ever liv'd a wretch they call'd Alberti!

Conſt. Curſe on the counſel vile!—thou thankleſs, mean,
Cruel, and unworthy man!—Is this then
The grateful, kind, and dear return, for friends,
For fame, for love, for dignity and rank,
And all I've loſt, triumphant loſt for thee?
Dig deep that grave thou talk'ſt of now, unkind,
Make room enough for both, for both I ſay;
O dig it to the centre down—deep, deep.
Far from parents, light, life, the hated world,
And ev'ry thought but thee, my heart's beſt joy.

Alb. Why blame my tenderneſs with ſuch returns?
Thou know'ſt my life is treaſur'd up in thine.

Conſt. Thou wou'dſt not baniſh me to pomp and courts,
To parents, friends, to comfort, light, and life;
Thou wou'dſt not envy me this bleſs'd abode,
Nor rob me of the precious Cave of Idra!
Let me dig up that grave, if thy poor hands
Should fail, and ſoftly make that low laid bed

Where

Where undiſturb'd we muſt for ever ſleep.
Alberti, was it kind to talk ſo ſtrange,
Thou treaſure of my ſoul! thy cruel words
Have ta'en away the props of ſinking life—
I never felt my bitter lot till now!
Now theſe ſad lamps ſeem dancing to my ſight;
And all their fading glimmer now goes out;
Oh, my Alberti, I ſhall die before thee! [*Faints.*

Alb. She faints, ſhe ſinks, ſupport her, O my Everard,——
Wou'd nature now let down the ſprings of life
In her and me, and in one happy moment
Cut quick the vital threads of both aſunder!
O where is now that dagger which I hid;
And ſhou'd releaſe from pain—O ſtay my ſeraph!
One gale of vital air may call her back:
Come, help to bear her from this loathed cell—
Aſſiſt, my Everard, thou art ever good.—

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT. IV.

SCENE I.

The Council Chamber in the Imperial Palace.

Rodolpho *and* Lorenzo.

Lor. THE Prince Colredo, of right worthy fame,
Has prov'd himſelf no recreant from his blood,
And ſo preſs'd Seyſert as t' obtain a charge

Againſt his conduct for perfidious crimes,
Strengthen'd by ſome diſcoveries lately made
Which have his maſter's virtues ſo alarm'd,
That in the ſummon'd council here to meet,
He means in perſon to attend the trial.

Rodol. Then muſt that meteor fall, that baleful glar'd
O'er all the land——whelming deſtruction ſure
On thoſe who dar'd t'oppoſe his ſelfiſh views,
And not conſent to be the tools of vice.

Loren. The creſt-fall'n traitor ſees too late his error,
That he muſt ſink as ſudden as he roſe,
Spurn'd by his Prince——deteſted by his peers,
And object of the people's univerſal curſe.

Rodol. But, behold his judges come!

Enter Members of the Council.——Colredo, *and the other Courtiers as Auditors; the Emperor preceded by ſome of his Body Guards, before whom when ſeated,* Seyfert *is brought in.*

Col. Moſt auguſt ſovereign of the German empire,
Tho' nought to me more grating than t'impeach,
Unleſs when groſſeſt crimes compel me to it;
Which mar allegiance—and diſgrace the throne;
Of all the charges, I 'gainſt Seyfert urge,
The firſt is to have made his creatures ſpread
Falſe rumours, as from me, to ſoil the fame
Of fair Conſtantia—That the duel caus'd,
'Gainſt which he publiſh'd his forbidding edict.
The next, his having your imperial ear
Abus'd with falſe reports, that brave Alberti
Said, as my lot was in the field to fall,
"Beneath his luckier ſword, had the Emperor
"Been there, he with repeated hoſtile wounds
"Wou'd have reveng'd his tyrant prohibition."

The

The third, his baſe intent upon my life,
In having me convey'd, for ſecret cure,
To a man brib'd by him to poiſon me,
And ſo prevent my vindicating truth,
In juſtly telling what Alberti ſaid:
" Colredo, I am ſorry for thy fall—
" Serve well our Prince; a better never reign'd!"
Behold a charge ſtill worſe—this wicked paper
Sent to Conſtantia's houſe—the imperial name,
A forgery as muſt to all appear,

[*The Members of the Council each view it.—The Emperor appears much agitated; one of the Council makes a ſign for Colredo to go on.*]

His farther, helliſh ſcheme, on the ſucceeding
Night, was to have ſeen the widow'd mourner ſeiz'd,
And carried to a place for violence form'd,
To force diſhonour on a hapleſs dame;
And then her body in the Danube thrown
As ſeeming by herſelf, through wild deſpair—
From which attempt, her lucky flight had ſav'd her.
The ſurgeon and the bravoes are without,
Ready t' atteſt each article I've urg'd,
The royal ſigning vouches its own falſhood,
Say, haſt thou aught in anſwer to me, Seyfert?

Seyf. No, my death's fix'd I ſee!—and do expect it.

Revenge I wiſh'd for, and therein have fail'd;
In my own toils I'm caught, and will not plead.

Emp. Thou monſter in our kind! thou blot of nature!
On whom ev'n hell muſt with amazement gaze,
To think one man can all its wickedneſs

Exceed,

Exceed—Hear then, thou villain multiplied!
Forthwith Alberti ſhall be brought to court,
With every honour that our ſtate can pay
To him and his much ſuffering Conſtantia.
But on the morn of their arrival here,
Thou dieſt! and till the executing hour,
Let that dire thought corrode thy ulcer'd ſoul—
Begone, thou wretch!—Guards, ſnatch him from my ſight.

[*Seyfert is carried off.*

Haſte thee, Lorenzo, let no time be loſt,
From Idra's Cave to bring the martyrs back,
With whom ſhall worthy ſeem of royal mercy.
If yet alive——their deaths I greatly fear;
And that Alberti, through heroic pride,
Cou'd not ſurvive the infamy of Idra.
Shou'd it prove ſo? endleſs reproach to me!
From that too common error of crown'd heads,
A weak reliance on the faith of others,
Inſtead of knowing all things by themſelves——
Break we up council——and all hence depart.

Exeunt.

SCENE II.

The Cave.

Alberti, Everard *and* Faulkner.

Alb. What, live to ſee ſuch mortal pangs again!
Survive ſuch conflicts and be ſtill a man!
Thou woud'ſt not have me live.

Ever. For her dear ſake, I'd bear it to the laſt,
Lay down the weary load of life with her.

Alb.

Alb. Thy reaſon is above ſuch mean advice;
Thy manly ſentiments cry ſhame upon't;
Didſt not adviſe me to the brave reſolve,
And ſay that none but hypocrites could blame it?
Low, earth-born worms, and ſuch as wanted ſouls
To do it? thou did'ſt—and I'll thy council take.

Ever. I knew not then the gripe that kept thee here,
The vital anchor that forbid thy paſſage,
And held thee faſten'd in the port of life;
I knew not then——by Heav'n, thy woes diſtract me,

Alb. My date of ſorrows ſhall be ſhorten'd ſoon,
I'll burſt the bonds, and ſet my love at large.

Ever. For her dear ſake endure this miſery
A little longer—unlook'd for remedies
May ſudden come from Heav'n's rich bliſsful ſtore
To thy relief, and all may yet be well.

Alb. I pray have done; I am reſolv'd to die:
Now look into thy own kind heart a little,
Feel but one moment what thy friend muſt ſuffer;
Oh, make my agoniſing lot thy own,
And figure to thyſelf what I muſt feel.
Each moment is much worſe to me than death:
I die a thouſand living deaths each hour;
Thro' ev'ry ſenſe the mortal arrows pierce,
And dread reflection ſharpens every point.

Ever. Say, would'ſt thou murder her, by ſtabbing thus
Thyſelf? She never will ſurvive the blow;
Conſider that, and wait the will of Heav'n.

Alb. Cou'd I bear all the bitter taſk for both;
Cou'd I from her pluck all the thorny anguiſh,
And plant it deep in this devoted boſom;

Cou'd

Cou'd I with tenfold tortures her redeem,
And ſet her ſad impriſon'd ſoul at large;
By Heav'n, I'd groan with joy beneath the load,
The precious load that made her burden light,
And ſtep by ſtep keep equal pace with time,
Till ſhe and nature ſhou'd together ſink
To fate's abyſs, and with the world expire!

Ever. And ſhe deſerves it from thy grateful heart,
The pride of nature and the boaſt of time;
But, oh! conſider thou wilt murder her.

Alb. She ſhall not ſee me give the generous blow;
And lenient time may heal the wound in her,
But whilſt I live her bondage muſt remain;
Her miſeries are grafted on my being;
She will be wretched whilſt ſhe looks on me,
And all her woes are plac'd to my account.
I muſt remove the magnet from her ſight,
And then my precious angel will be free,
And live long years of joy when I am gone,
And mix'd with this forgotten mould for ever;
It ſhall be ſo—by Heav'n, my friend, it ſhall!
See my remains depoſited in duſt,
With all the decency this den affords.
Then take her with thee to the earth's green lap,
Theſe horrid limits cannot hold her here,
For ſhe's as free as fragrant gales that breathe,
O'er laughing lawns, and beds of roſes ſweet.
O take her with thee, like the morning ſtar,
And let her ſee her father and her friends;
And, oh! if poſſible, let Conſtantia
Never think more of loſt Alberti's name!
Oh, muſt I then be torn from her for ever!
Oh, muſt I never more behold her face!
Oh, agony! beyond enduring long;

Diſtraction

Diſtraction quick, or inſtant death ſhall ſave me;
Now, my Everard, all my doubts ſhall vaniſh;
And with this blow I conquer my hard fate!

Enter Conſtantia.

Con. Ah, ſtop thy horrid hand! what wou'd thy phrenzy!
Ruffian, coward, traitor to thy love and me!
Alb. Stand off, thou idol of my parting ſoul!
I die the martyr of my love and thee;
I cannot look upon thy face and live:
Nor love, nor friendſhip ſhall bind down this hand:
No pow'r on earth, not ev'n thy much lov'd arm!
Con. Oh, help me, Everard! to reſtrain his rage.
Was this thy mean invented trick to ſteal,
And leave me ſtruggling in the breach alone?
What, like a bravo, play the coward's part,
The pooreſt meaneſt coward's part; fling down
That daring inſtrument of fear and ſhame;
And let a woman teach thee to be brave.
Alb. Live, Conſtance, I command thee live——be happy,
And liſten to my Everard; he will be
A friend to thee, thou idol of my ſoul!——
Nay—all thy fond entreaties are in vain;
Thy precious tears that mingle with my blood,
That look that might diſarm a tyger's rage,
My reſolution is too ſtrong for all.
My Everard will be thy faithful friend,
And to thy happy father ſafe reſtore thee;

This

This moment is the laſt I e'er ſhall breathe—
Remember well the dear advice I give thee;
A long farewell to all——

Enter a Slave with Lights, followed by Lorenzo *and Officer.*

Lor. Hold thy raſh hand!

Alb. Ha! is there then a ruling hand above!
Or are they mortals that prevent my fate?
Oh! art thou then a meſſenger of grace
Sent down with winged ſpeed from watchful Heav'n?
Ah, is there then one friendly angel there,
Who thinks upon a wretch like loſt Alberti?

Lor. There is, there is, recover thy loſt reaſon:
I come to chear thee now with joyful tidings.

Alb. Eternal Providence, I now adore thee!
My brother, and my friend, the lord Lorenzo!

Lor. Art thou the ſad remains of him I lov'd,
The gallant, noble, and the brave Alberti?

Alb. I am thy friend; thy wretched friend, thy brother.

Lor. My happy brother, and my reſcu'd friend,
Say, is my wretched ſiſter yet alive?
Or has ſhe periſh'd in this horrid cave?

Alb. She lives, thy injur'd ſiſter lives, with mind
As radiant, as her form is darken'd—See
The drooping angel by her woes oppreſs'd;
My tranced ſoul! Oh, what a change is here!

Lor. Oh, my dear, my long-loſt and injur'd ſiſter!
Oh, pow'r of mercy, what a ſight is here!
Oh, ſpeak, Conſtantia, and rejoice with me.
Look kindly on thy lov'd, thy dear Lorenzo,
He brings thee news will drive thy woes away:
Thy huſband's pardon, and thy father's bleſſing.

Conſt.

Conſt. To leave me ſhiv'ring in a place like this,
Who came ſo far, ſo very far to ſee him!
Had I a dagger I ſhould ſoon be with him.
He ſtole unkindly from my widow'd arms,
And I ſhall ſearch about in vain to find him;
Oh! this will be a bitter night to me!

Loren. Thy groundleſs grief miſleads thy troubled mind,
It is but fancy and deceitful viſion.

Conſt. I ſaw the bloody dagger in his hand;
To leave his Conſtance in the Cave of Idra!
What ſtorms what whirlwinds thunder in that thought!
Ay, then the dagger gleams — Ah! ſee — he ſits
On yonder cloud, and waits to take me with him! —

Loren. Thy huſband lives, and kneels with joy before thee.
Enjoy my ſiſter, this bleſt change of fortune;
Call home thy reaſon and behold thy huſband
With open arms and panting heart before thee.

Conſt. That curſed dagger! had I ſnatch'd thee firſt,
My huſband, now, and I had ſlept together; —
It was ſo ſelfiſh and ſo fraudful in him,
I thought him honeſt as the laws of heav'n;
I will purſue him to the courts on high —
Theſe doors are bar'd, and I'm a ſlave for ever.

Loren. Call reaſon home, reflect my deareſt ſiſter,
Thy huſband lives, and I'm thy happy brother.

Conſt. What dreadful glimpſes ſhoot athwart my mind,
And let in light on my diſtracted ſoul!
Oh, barbarous Alberti! — Who ſtands there?
Or does his cruel phantom mock me thus?
Or am I with him in the land of ſpirits?

Alb. Alas, my love! I am no ſpirit, but Alberti —
Thy god-like brother ſtop'd my deſp'rate hand;
He was the ſaving angel that preſerv'd me:
Thy brother, Lord Lorenzo, ſtands before thee,
He brings my pardon, and thy father's bleſſing.

Conſt. How my mind labours, and my ſenſes wander
A train of motley'd things are marſhal'd now
Before me: who ſtands there?— It is that white hope
That mingles with the throng — and drives far off
The ugly forms of black deſpair? — I ſaw
The bloody dagger in his boſom plung'd —
And yet, methinks, I ſaw my brother too.

Loren. Thou did'ſt; thy loving brother ſtands before thee.

Conſt. The clouds clear up, the dawn approaches nigh,
The curtain of my fate has chang'd its colour;
I ſee a thouſand gaudy viſions there!
It is the ſtory of my chequer'd life!
How the white brightens, and the black grows pale —
The morning beams; 'tis day-light all around.—
What ſhapes are theſe? My brother and my huſband!
It is my noble brother! and my huſband
Is yet alive! I ſee them both before me! —
Now radiant joys come ruſhing to my boſom;
Oh, now, divide my panting heart between you!
My raptur'd ſoul comes leaping to my lips!
My brother and my huſband, both alive!
And in the Cave of Idra! Oh, come both;
Come both, my heart ſhall make you ample room,
And lodge you both within my breaſt for ever!
There never was a wretch ſo bleſt as I!

Loren. O thou art bleſs'd beyond the reach of hope,
The reach of wiſhes, and the world's deſpite.

Alb. Yes, thou ſhalt ſhine once more my precious love,
Among the courtly ſtars diſtinguiſh'd high,
And crown'd the richeſt conſtellation there,
With virtuous beauty brighter than the ſun.

Conſt. Thy love is all my higheſt boaſt on earth;
My brother! what a happy change is this!
My deareſt brother, ſay, how cam'ſt thou hither?

Loren.

Loren. I will explain it all in proper ſeaſon,
And thy much haraſs'd ſoul ſhall taſte of comfort.
Alb. Ah, Conſtantia! thy hurted mind had near —
Forgive my raſhneſs, Oh! I could not live
And ſee thee wretched for my ſake — forgive me.
Conſt. I will not now rebuke thy raſh attempt,
Nor call thy cruel purpoſe by its name;
I'll talk of nothing now but joy and wonder.
My bounding heart! I know not what I do!
So ſudden, and ſo glorious! from this hell
To that bright Heav'n! I cannot bear ſuch bliſs,
It is too much for my oppreſs'd ſpirit,
Weak nature ſinks beneath the vaſt extreme —
Let doubting infidels be dumb for ever.
Thou cave accurs'd, my ſoul ſhall bleſs thee now;
Still call thy precious image up, both day
And night, with bitter, ſweet remembrance. I
Shall ſee my father's face again — Embrace
His aged rev'rend knees, and aſk his bleſſing —
Then ſhall my mother ſhed the tears of joy
With melting heart upon her kneeling daughter;
Then ſhall my huſband ſay that I deſerve him.
Alb. His pride, his boaſt, and his eternal triumph!
O thou ſhalt be thy happy huſband's theme
Thro' ev'ry joyful ſtage of reſcu'd life;
And, oh, when gentle time with lenient hand
By weary nature taught, ſhall lay me down
In hoary reſignation ſweet on thy
Peaceful pillow, and in thy arms held faſt,
My fault'ring tongue in feeble dying ſounds,
With cloſing eyes in life's expiring gaſp,
Shall call on Conſtance and the Cave of Idra —
Oh, I will for ever love and bleſs thee —
But ages of delight wide ſtretch between us
And that diſtant hour; Oh! thou ſhalt ere then
Be bleſt and honour'd by th' adoring world.
Thy worth ſhall be the theme of ev'ry muſe,
And breathing ſtatues ſhall record thy name.

Loren.

Loren. Haſte hence, my brother, O my ſiſter, haſte,
Theſe hateful weeds offend me to the ſoul.
Alk. Conſtantia come, let's take the laſt farewel
Of our ſad dwelling, reaſſume ourſelves,
And viſit light with chearful hearts once more.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

An Area before the Palace.

FAULKNER *and* MENTZEL.

MENTZEL.

THAT human wickedneſs to ſuch a pitch
Can riſe, preſent and future times muſt wonder!
Vindictive Seyfert! Monſter of the age!
Is a diſgrace to nature and our country.
He has entail'd diſhonour on his name;
His houſe is cancel'd from nobility;
And he, weak compenſation for his guilt!
This morn in private is to ſuffer death,
That his fell breath mayn't taint the atmoſphere,
When the heroic ſuff'rers ſhall approach.
Faulk. How juſt are thy awards, O Providence!
To let the vicious run their courſe of pride,
And in their full career to check, when leaſt
They dread the interpoſing hand of Heav'n!

Enter Guards, SEYFERT, BURMAN, *and Chaplain to the Priſon.*

Ment. But the door opens; and the guard comes forth

To

To range around the ſcaffold — what deſpair
And complicated terror in his look!

Faulk. We now ſhall ſee how vice can meet its end.
That done, we'll haſte without the city gate
To view th' inveſtiture in all its pomp,
Of Count Alberti for the golden fleece,
And fair Conſtantia for Tereſa's order;
The higheſt tribute e'er was paid to virtue.

Ment. And juſt, ſince virtue is above all human titles.

Seyf. O, faithful Burman, thou in me behold'ſt
Of what uncertain tenure's human life,
When not conducted by the rules of virtue!
Inſtead of foll'wing policy's vile tracks,
Whoſe wicked dictates teach mea to be falſe,
To ſpurn at feelings of our fellow creatures,
As a mean weakneſs, quite beneath a ſtateſman.
Thus oft inhumanly I've dealt by others,
For which I'm doom'd to puniſhment condign;
Nor ſhall I ſtartle from the ſword, but wiſh
Its friendly blow, to put an end to pain,
Rather than live the ſcorn, the hate of all,
And daily undergo new infamy,
Though in this world — no mercy I deſire,
'Tis th' utmoſt ſtretch of daring expectation
For crimes like mine to hope it in the next.

Chap. Forbear, raſh man, nor dare to circumſcribe
Th' almighty will—

Seyf. I am prepar'd [*To Burman.*] — proceed —
Accept this ring in token of thy truth,
And ſee thy maſter in his coffin laid.

[*Exeunt Burman, Seyfert, &c.*

SCENE II.

One of the Court-Yards of the Imperial Palace.

RODOLPHO *and* EVERARD.

Rod. How ſtupendnous are the ways of Heaven!
Was ever change ſo happy, ſo deſerv'd

And

And glorious! — Believe me, sir, my heart
Exults! — Amazement mix'd with joy elates
My raptur'd soul! my much lov'd, rescu'd friend!
I feel his transports, and I share his honours.
Ever. This wond'rous revolution has impress'd
Upon my mind a sense of Providence
More strong than ever, and my thoughts are heighten'd
To a more elevated pitch — I feel
A glow of fervour in my conscious mind,
From bright revealing truth! amazing all!
But Heav'nly power extends its gracious arm
Beyond the narrow reach of mortal sight,
And often is as wonderful as good! —
The virtuous, the distress'd, should ne'er despair,
And fair Constantia is a glorious proof.
Rod. The noblest in the regist'ry of years,
Her love and virtue are without a rival
In Hebrew annals, or in Grecian tales,
Nor can the Roman records boast her equal.
Ever. How much it to your monarch's praise redounds,
A glorious lesson to all patriot kings,
Thus to concession make for injur'd worth,
And retribution for the wrongs it suffer'd.
Rod. The mandate's given, that they procession make
Thro' the great street that to the palace leads,
With ev'ry honour that's to sov'reigns paid,
And make the city's rampart shake around.
Ever. But here comes Clermont, the brave Gallic youth
Noble Albert rescu'd from the cave.—
That happiness I long foretold you, Sir,
Is come to pass — I now congratulate
Your safe return to light and liberty!

Enter CLERMONT.

Cler. O most humane and gen'rous Sir, words are
Too weak t'express my grateful, fervent thanks —

For

For your kind aid and friendly influence —
Bleſs'd be the name of Britain — whoſe fam'd ſons
Thus feel for mis'ry, and abhor oppreſſion!

Ever. Sure, from thy joy ſtrong painted on thy face
The exiles are receiv'd with loud acclaims.

Cler. My gladden'd eyes with friendly tears o'erflow'd
On ſeeing of ſuch univerſal joy.
Each houſe with richeſt tapeſtry is hung,
And ev'ry window throng'd with crowding looks,
In joyful expectation of their coming.—
While joſtling multitudes through ſtreets below,
Aſk of each other, have they yet appear'd?
How looks Conſtantia? — Is Alberti chang'd? —
But none have time to give a gentle anſwer,
So eager ruſh all forward to behold them.

Rod. This narrative's a cordial to my ſoul.

Cler. The old, the young, congratulate each other
With thouſand bleſſings on th' emperor's name,
For having puniſh'd ſuch a fiend as Seyfert,
And nobly reſcu'd ſuch heroic virtue!
In ſhort, on ev'ry ſide, from ev'ry tongue,
Conſtantia and Alberti are the theme! — [*A gun.*
Hark! that's the ſignal of their march begun,
Let's haſte to view, and join them as they come.

SCENE III.

The Great Street of Vienna.

A grand Proceſſion; Flowers are ſtrewed by the People. —Shouts frequently heard, with ringing of Bells and firing of cannon. — An Ode of rejoicing — which follows here.

I.

They come, they come, the honour'd pair,
He the valiant, ſhe the fair;
Of green branches ſtrip the bow'rs,
Strew their path with fragrant flow'rs.
Be this the ſong on all our plains,
Vice is puniſh'd, virtue reigns.

II. Let

II.

Let wrinkled age now ſmooth its brow,
And blooming youth this truth avow;
No objects more our wonder move
Than thoſe who've ſuffer'd moſt for love.
Be this the ſong on all our plains,
Vice is puniſh'd, virtue reigns.

III.

Celeſtial beings, with delight,
On earth muſt view ſo rare a ſight;
What godlike attributes belong
T' a monarch's owning he was wrong,
And due redreſs to th' injur'd deigns;
Vice is puniſh'd, virtue reigns.

CHORUS.

They come, they come, &c.

At the Cloſe of the Proceſſion, enter ALBERTI *and* CONSTANTIA.

Alb. Am I once more within Vienna's walls,
The fav'rite ſcene of all my youthful years?
And what is more, my dear Conſtantia here?
Conſt. Oh, my Alberti, my fond heart is full!
I can't find words — to ſpeak my raptur'd ſoul!
T' encreaſe our joy — your faithful friends appear.

Enter EVERARD *and* FAULKNER.

Alb. Now, good Everard, let my arms embrace thee
As ſuits thy ſtation — and the count Alberti.
Say, worthy friend! did ever mortal meet
So happy a reverſe — from ſo deplor'd a ſtate?
Ever. Never, indeed! nor ever ſo deſerv'd —
Alb. Behold that angel to herſelf reſtor'd:
Was ſhe an inmate for the Cave of Idra?
Let Europe gaze — let kings fall down before her.
Now, gen'rous Everard, recognize that face!

Revere

Revere that form where ev'ry virtue dwells:
Let Oral Tales — and history be dumb! —
Let blushing time destroy his annals now,
And sum up all his boasted list in her. —
Ever. The kindling ardour of thy rapture'd soul
Has fir'd my breast — I see her all perfection;
I see her reap the harvest of her glory.
A thousand triumphs welcome thee to light, [*To Const.*
Thou matchless wonder, and thou beauteous saint!
Earth's flow'ry honours strew thy virtuous path,
And shouting thousands welcome thee to life!
To friends, to parents, with thy lov'd Alberti!
Const. To all my heart shall ever glow with thanks.
'Tis more than recompense for all my wrongs. —
Who, Sir, wou'd grudge to suffer as we've done,
If sure of meeting with such public praise?
Thy friendship in my breast, engraven deep,
Kind, worthy Everard, shall ever live!
Alb. Hast thou yet seen the generous Rodolpho,
Whose worth shall to my soul be always dear.
Ever. I have, and am but parted from him now;
He to the court is gone, to learn what lords
Are to conduct you to th' imperial presence.
Alb. Oh! inexpressive joy! behold, he's here!
With him Lorenzo and Colredo come!
Rod. Oh! my Alberti!
Alb. Rodolpho! best of men.
Loren. Lo, brother, to compleat our ev'ry joy,
I, and Colredo, by the emperour sent,
Are now to bring, and place you 'fore the throne.
Col. Illustrious Sir, and you most honour'd Lady,
Permit me, e'er I dare, like other friends,
T' imbrace, and warm congratulations join,
To clear my name from Seyfert's foul reports.
I ne'er spoke of you but with that respect, [*To Const.*
Which borders more on a religious worship
Than polish'd courtesy to human race. [*To Alb.*

So far from envying thy happy lot,
This conſolation for my loſs I bore,
That from the rival crowd of her admirers,
She'd chos'n a man much worthier than myſelf.

Alb. A ſoul like yours could ne'er ſeek ſuch revenge,
My heart abſolves — and greets a former friend.

Conſt. I always knew Colredo's princely honour,
And ne'er could think he'd ſtoop to acts of baſeneſs.

Rod. Shame endleſs to the name that ſpread the doubt.

Col. That a fell villain ſhould ſuch miſchief work!
But he's no more! and my reſentment dies!

Loren. Let's think not of it — or th' infernal cauſe;
Give ſignal to advance — heralds lead on.

The Song is renew'd without, till the Proceſſion is quite off the Stage. Two Curaſſiers remain on, who had followed the Proceſſion.

1ſt Cur. How diff'rent this return from the late exit
Which brave Alberti from Vienna made,
And felon-like to Idra's Cave was ſent.

2d Cur. The then proud heart of Seyfert now lies low! —
His deeds poſterity will tell with horror!
And pour eternal curſes on his name.

1ſt Cur. While the long pageant to the palace moves,
Let's to the church, where with religious pomp
For this event, thankſgiving's to be ſung.

2d Cur. A worthier cauſe than for a battle won.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Grand Saloon of Audience.

The Emperor on his Throne in the Robes of Sov'reignty, attended by his Courtiers. — ALBERTI *and* CONSTANTIA *kneeling.*

Emp. Ariſe — Thus for your ſufferings I bow. —
All, all, ſalute them as your ſov'reign's friends —

In

In ſaving you — how is my glory ſav'd!
Had ye died victims of a ſentence raſh,
What from my name could e'er the ſtain eraze?
That all the records of ſucceeding ages,
Muſt ſhrink from with the utmoſt deteſtation!
But th' interference of all-ruling Heaven
Has ſnatch'd me from precipitate diſgrace,
Which ever muſt ſupremacy befal,
That veſts with miniſterial pow'r a wretch,
Who'd veil with virtuous maſk the worſt deſigns,
To favour vengeful or ambitious views.
[*Riſes from the throne.*
From ſuch — Omnipotence protect my throne!
Let me not, ſeated there, forget I'm man;
To thee amenable for all my judgements:
In that dread day when no diſtinction's known,
To give man pow'r is but the means of ſin,
Unleſs with wiſdom you that pow'r direct,
And ſhield his breaſt from paſſion's anarchy.—
Alberti, thy merit and thy ſufferings
Claim from me a due reward — Hence do I
Here appoint thee to act for us with juſt,
With delegated ſway throughout the empire,
And all acknowledge what I now declare him:
Guide of my councils — General of the brave.
——— *To Conſtantia.* ———
While from thy ſex thou ſhalt all honours have,
Mirror of wives — and Heroine of the Cave!

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY

MISS YOUNGE.

WELL, Sirs, and Ladies, whether gay or grave,
[*Looking around.*
'Tis better to be here than in the Cave.
Now, that *Alberti*'s ſafe, within my calling,
With him, 'fore liberty, I'd chuſe *enthralling*;
By day to work, by night to fondly cling:
For a good huſband is ſo good a thing!
No mountain ſure ſo high, no vale ſo ſteep,
One would not boldly ſoar, or lowly creep,
In anxious queſt of that dear, charming creature,
A man of honour, poliſh'd ſenſe, good nature!
O, Ladies, Ladies, what enchanting treaſure!
May ye be all poſſeſt of ſuch — No meaſure
To your encreaſing bliſs can e'er be known,
As from experience zealouſly you'll own;
If, on your parts, with virtuous emulation,
You've always foremoſt in chaſte contemplation,
To clear the tarniſh'd glory of our nation:
That thro' the various ranks of human life,
Woman's firſt title is a faithful wife.
Therein is all her fortitude to ſhine,
With truth heroic, ſanctity divine;
That angels, with complacence, joy to view,
And was the moral ſketch our authors drew.
Tho' we've no ribband for ſuch worth to give,
In fame's immortal regiſtry you'll live; —
Exalted models of true female merit,
And blooming maids will lineally inherit,
That pureſt recompenſe to hearts refin'd,
The world's applauſe, and ſelf-approving mind.
Thus far I've dar'd; to treſpaſs more I wave —
Deem it not forward, I one favour crave —
You'll ſometimes think on *Th' Heroine of the Cave.*

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